

TPP and TTIP “Free Market” “Trade” Deals Approved by US Senate: How America’s “News” Media Killed America’s Democracy:

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As I [reported on Wednesday](#), a deal was worked out in the U.S. Senate on the early afternoon of May 13th to “Fast-Track” through to approval U.S. President Barack Obama’s proposed trade deals, TPP with Asia, and TTIP with Europe. (It should have been reported on the nightly TV news programs, but most of them ignored it then, and reported the news only the next day when the Senators made it official.)

TPP and TTIP have been represented in America’s press as ‘trade’ deals, but instead they’re actually about sovereignty. They’re about America and the other participating countries handing their democratic sovereignty — on regulation of the environment, consumer protection, worker protection, and finance — over to panels, all of whose members will be selected by the large international corporations that for years have been working with U.S. President Obama’s Trade Representative to draft these “trade” treaties.

If some corporation “C” under these ‘trade deals’ then brings a case to one of those panels and says that country “X” has any regulations regarding the environment, consumer protection, worker protection, or finance, that are stricter than the ones that are set forth in TPP and TTIP, then country X will be assessed to pay a fine to corporation C, for “unfair trade practices” against that corporation.

In other words: these corporate panels will constitute a new international government, with the power to fine countries for exceeding the regulations that are set forth in these international ‘trade’ treaties.

President Obama’s Trade Representative, [Michael Froman](#), has told the AFL-CIO and U.S. Senators that when countries such as Colombia systematically murder labor-union organizers, it’s no violation of workers’ rights — nothing that is of any concern to the U.S. regarding this country’s international trade policies or enforcement. On April 22nd, Huffington Post, one of the few U.S. news media to report honestly on these treaties, bannered [“AFL-CIO’s Trumka: USTR Told Us Murder Isn’t A Violation,”](#) and reported that, “Defenders of the White House push for sweeping trade deals argue they include tough enforcement of labor standards. But a top union leader scoffed at such claims Tuesday, revealing that administration officials have said privately that they don’t consider even the killings of labor organizers to be violations of those pacts.

“In other words: this is and will be the low level of the playing-field that U.S. workers will be competing against in TPP and TTIP, just as it is already, in the

far-smaller NAFTA. “Trumka said that even after the Obama administration crafted an agreement to tighten labor protections four years ago, some 105 labor organizers have been killed, and more than 1,300 have been threatened with death.”

The Obama Administration is ignoring the tightened regulations that it itself managed to get implemented on paper.

“Pressed for details about Trumka’s assertion that murder doesn’t count as a violation of labor rules, Thea Lee, the AFL-CIO deputy chief of staff, told HuffPost that USTR officials said in at least two meetings where she was present that killing and brutalizing organizers would not be considered interfering with labor rights under the terms of the trade measures.”

Furthermore: “‘We documented five or six murders of Guatemalan trade unionists that the government had failed to effectively investigate or prosecute,’ Lee said. ‘The USTR told us that the murders of trade unionists or violence against trade unionists was not a violation of the labor chapter.’” That U.S. Trade Representative, Michael Froman, is the same person Obama has negotiating with foreign governments, and with international corporations, both the TPP, and the TTIP.

Any country in TPP or TTIP that brings up worker-protection regulations which are beyond this abysmal level will be fined by corporate panels, and those fines will then become income to the companies whose ‘rights’ (such as to murder labor-organizers) have been violated, under the terms of the given treaty: TPP or TTIP.

And that’s just one example of the type of sovereignty (in this instance over workers’ rights) that is being ceded to international corporations, under these ‘trade’ deals.

As the UN’s top official on such matters has said, TTP & TTIP will produce [“a dystopian future in which corporations and not democratically elected governments call the shots.”](#)

It couldn’t have happened if not for the fact that such news reports as that just quoted from Huffington Post have constituted *only a tiny minority of the ‘news’ reports about these proposed ‘trade’ deals, in the American press.*

Every Senator, and every member of the U.S. House, who votes for “Fast Track” approval for these deals, is looking for big money from big corporations, and not for fulfilling his or her supposed and oathed job: to be an authentic representative of the public back home — and of their children, and future generations.

The idea that these are ‘free market’ treaties is the biggest of all Big Lies. They’re a transfer of sovereignty from national democracies to a fascistic world government. This is the biggest news-story of our times, and it’s been virtually ignored, until it’s too late to stop.

Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse** is the author, most recently, of [*They’re Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010*](#), and of [*CHRIST’S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity*](#), and of [*Feudalism, Fascism, Libertarianism and Economics*](#).

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